



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release:
December 20, 2002 bur1220.rel

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BLM To Burn Debris from Fuels Thinning Projects

SILVER CITY – Crews from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management will burn piles of debris next week near Pinos Altos, according to Amy Lueders, BLM-Las Cruces field office manager.

The debris includes branches and brush gathered during fuels thinning projects earlier this year west of Pinos Altos. Smoke from the small fires may be visible from Silver City, along Highway 15 and in Pinos Altos, according to Ryan Whiteaker, a BLM fire technician.

Local fire agencies will join BLM personnel and equipment to ensure safety during the pile burnings along the already-cleared fuel break. Burning is tentatively scheduled for Sunday and Monday and will be carried out only under planned weather parameters.

“We want area residents to be aware of what we’re doing next week and not be alarmed,” Lueders said. “We hope that the smoke will be a signal reminding Grant County residents of the work being done on their behalf to prevent catastrophic fires.”

The BLM is working with New Mexico State Forestry, the U.S. Forest Service and others to clear small diameter ponderosa pine, pinon pine and juniper in an on-going project west of Pinos Altos. About 150 acres have been cleared this year, Whiteaker said.

The BLM manages about 13 million acres in New Mexico. The Las Cruces field office is responsible for about 5.4 million of those acres in six southwestern New Mexico counties.